

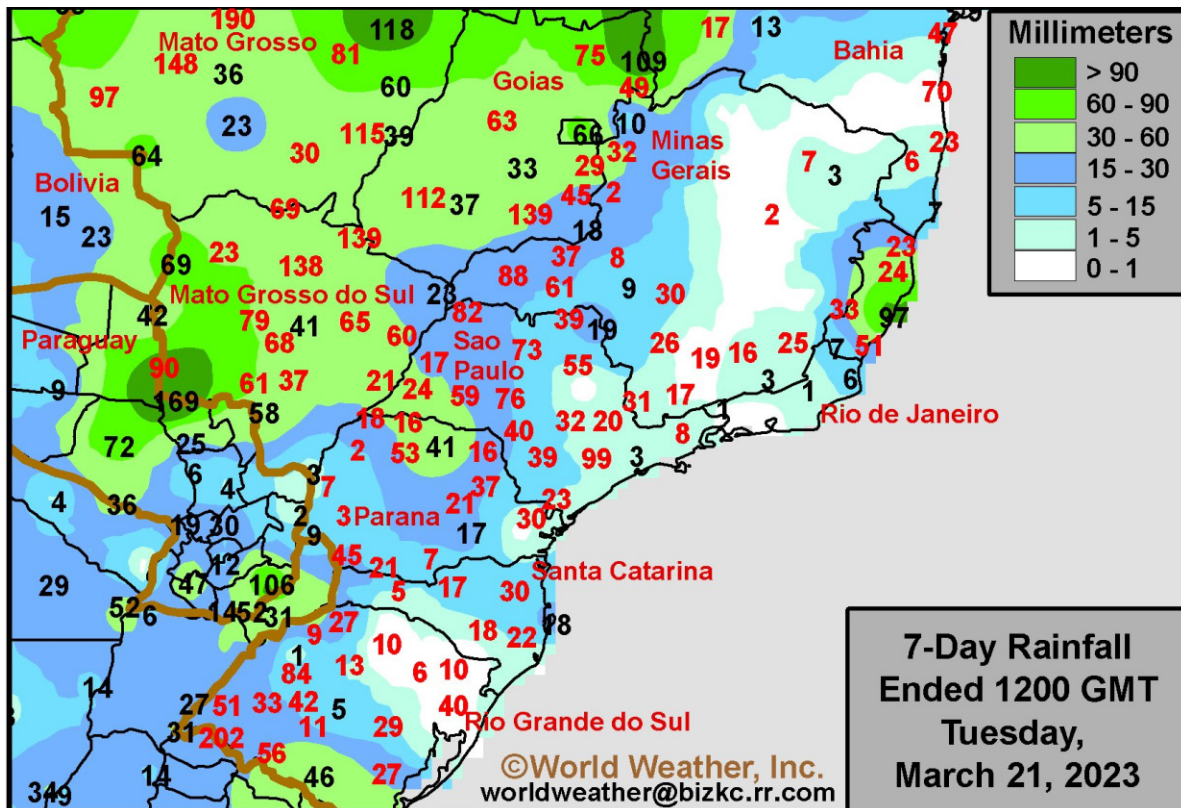
Brazil Soybean Harvest To Advance As Ground Firms

By Andrew Owen

Kansas City, March 21 (World Weather Inc.) – *Much improved late season harvest and Safrinha corn planting weather is under way in Brazil and it will continue through much of the coming week. Areas from Mato Grosso do Sul and Parana to southern Minas Gerais were plagued by weeks of frequent rain and poor drying conditions resulting in a much slower field working pace than normal. Harvesting of soybeans and the planting of late-season Safrinha corn should advance more swiftly as the ground dries down. Other production areas will see periods of rain continue that may interfere with farming operations, but the impact will be much lower than that of center south crop areas in recent weeks.*

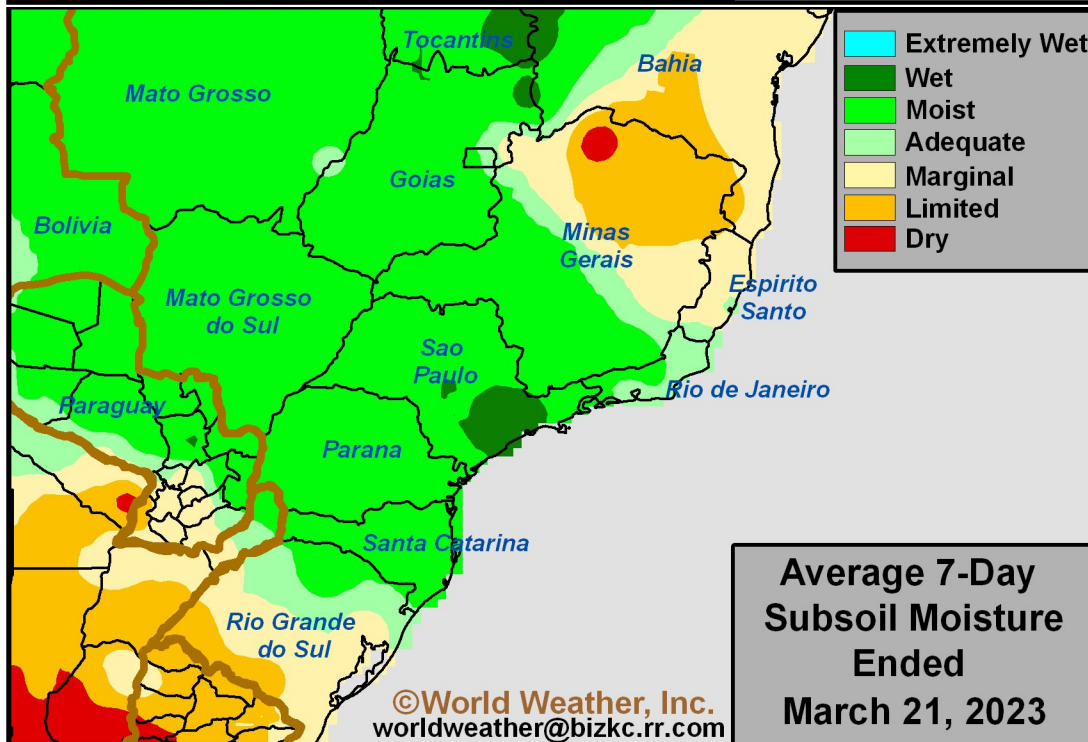
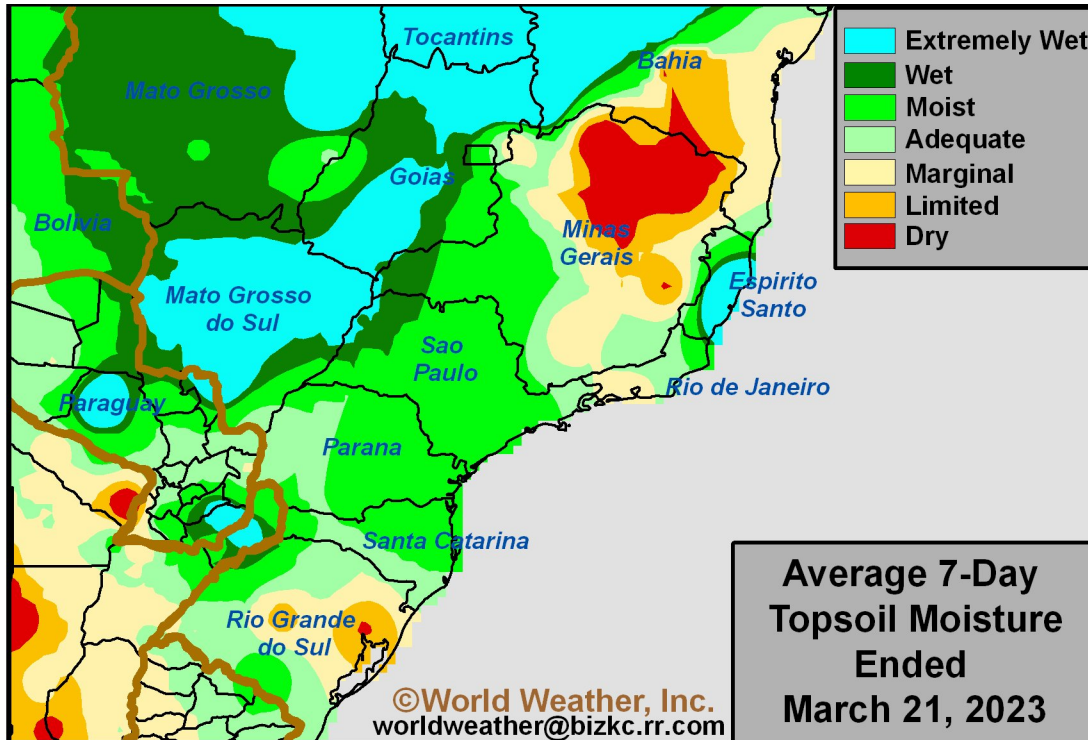
Rainfall during the week ending at dawn today (Tuesday) was greatest from northern Parana and western and northern Sao Paulo through Mato Grosso do Sul to Mato Grosso, Tocantins and Maranhao where 1.00 to 3.00 inches was common and local totals reached 5.47 inches. There were a few lighter rain totals embedded into the region, but most of the described region were plenty wet. Some moderate rain of 0.50 to 2.00 inches also occurred in portions of western and southern Rio Grande do Sul and in random other locations from Santa Catarina to southern Minas Gerais and Espirito Santo. The driest region was in interior Bahia and northern into central Minas Gerais where little to no rain fell.

Afternoon temperatures were warm with highest readings in the 80s and 90s Fahrenheit. Lowest morning temperatures were in the 60s and 70s with pockets in southern Brazil cooling to the 50s.



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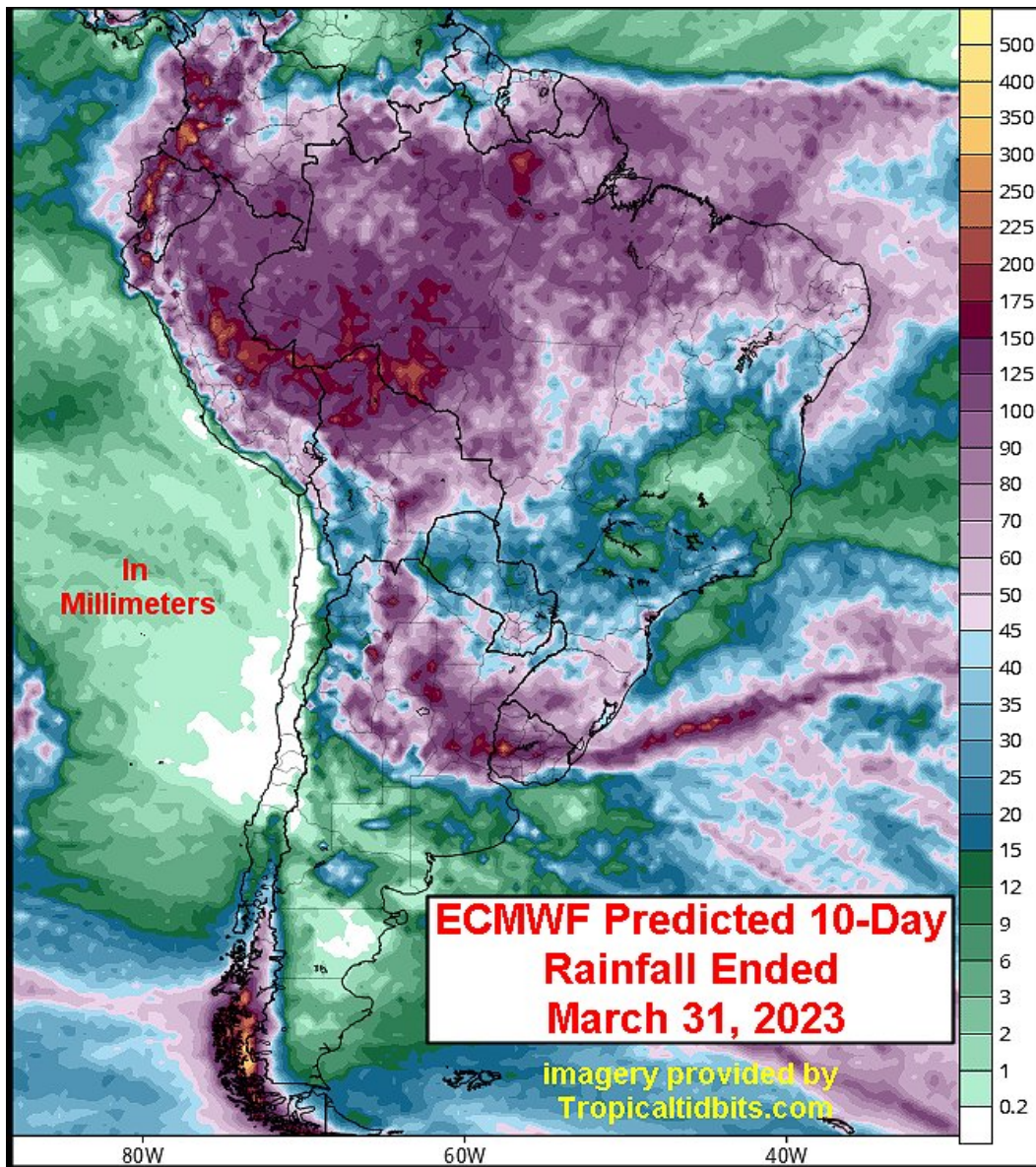
Northern and central Minas Gerais into southeastern Bahia continued to dry down during the past week. These areas generally had marginally adequate to very short soil moisture which may have stressed some unirrigated crops. Soil moisture remains at adequate to excessive levels in the remaining production areas.



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Fieldwork remains sluggish across Brazil due to the ongoing rain. As of March 18, soybean harvesting was 62.5% complete, up from 53.4% from the previous week but down from 70.6% at this time last year. First-season corn progress was 35% complete, down from 41.6% last year. The rice harvest was only 19.9% complete, down from 27.1% last year. The wet weather has not significantly impacted crop quality, though drier weather is needed for more aggressive harvesting.

According to CONAB, Safrinha corn planting also remains behind normal for this time of year. As of March 18, planting was 85.1% complete, down from 94.7% this time last year. Sao Paulo, Mato Grosso do Sul, and Parana were furthest behind in planting. The main production areas have plenty of moisture to support aggressive establishment and early-season development. *As long as timely rain occurs later in the forecast period, no significant production impacts are expected for the Safrinha corn due to late planting; however, seasonal rains normally end in April and late planted crops may run low on soil moisture during reproduction hurting production potentials.*



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WEATHER OUTLOOK

Precipitation will vary across Brazil's main production areas during the coming week. Mato Grosso do Sul, Sao Paulo, and northern fringes of Parana into Minas Gerais and southern Bahia will be drier biased. High pressure will often settle over these locations, though periods of erratic rain will still occur on a frequent basis. Moisture totals by next Tuesday morning will range from 0.25 to 1.00 inch with pockets in northern and central Minas Gerais and western Sao Paulo that will be mostly dry. Pockets in southern Minas Gerais and eastern Sao Paulo will also receive 1.50 inches or slightly more of moisture. Southern Brazil and the remaining portions of center-west Brazil will otherwise have several opportunities for erratic rainfall. Some of the most widespread and significant rain will evolve through this weekend. Moisture totals by next Tuesday morning will range from 0.75 to 2.50 inches with locally greater amounts in Rio Grande do Sul. Much of Brazil's production region will see a mix of rain and sunshine March 29 – April 4.

The temperature profile will trend near normal through next Tuesday in much of Brazil. Daytime highs will peak to the 80s and lower 90s in most locations with portions of southern and center-south Brazil only warming to the 70s during periods of rain. Pockets from Mato Grosso do Sul into Bahia and Minas Gerais will also warm to the upper 90s during periods of drier weather. Low temperatures will be in the 60s and 70s with pockets in southern Brazil cooling to the 50s.

The lack of significant rain and warm daytime temperatures will help promote aggressive drying from Mato Grosso do Sul, Sao Paulo, and northern Parana into Minas Gerais and southern Bahia this week. Soybean and first-season corn harvest prospects will improve as the ground firms. Significant harvest progress is expected, though some producers may need more time to get the rest of the crop out of the ground. Late-season Safrinha corn planting will also advance swiftly for these locations.

Harvesting and general fieldwork may remain sluggish at times in Mato Grosso, Goias, and far southern Brazil during the coming week. Producers will still have opportunities to get into the fields, though the ground will remain too wet for ideal harvest conditions. Safrinha corn conditions will otherwise remain generally favorable.

COFFEE, CITRUS AND SUGARCANE WEATHER

Weather conditions in citrus, sugarcane and coffee areas has been improving recently with less frequent and less intensive rainfall from Mato Grosso do Sul through Parana to southern Minas Gerais. Some of these areas were quite wet at times this growing season. The more recent trend toward less rain and greater sunshine will bode well for late season crop development.

Sugarcane may have suffered most from the rainy and milder than usual weather this summer. Drier weather now and into the harvest season can still raise sucrose levels. Citrus has likely experienced nearly ideal weather this year and the crop should be large and of good quality. Coffee production in some of the most important production areas should be good and the quality of the crop is expected to be favorable as well; however, some of the coffee in areas from Zona de Mata and Espirito Santo northward into Bahia

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has been dry-biased in recent weeks and that may be harming some of the crop quality. The drier bias may also limit cherry sizes in some of the areas that have been driest for the longest period of time.

Weather in the next ten days to two weeks should be favorably mixed to help crops finish out the season well. The drier bias in Bahia, Espirito Santo and northern and eastern Minas Gerais may prevail and that could further raise concern over the flavor of coffee in unirrigated areas and might lead to sugarcane maturation and harvesting a little faster than usual.

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